

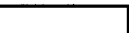
*Bell, Ray*

*22 Dec 58*

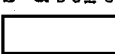
*12/8/58*

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MEMO FOR FILES

 Deputy for Support

A Mr. Tom Gri (phonetic) phoned 5 December 1958, said he was with Screen Gems (a subsidiary of Columbia Pictures Corp.) and that his company plans to start a TV series, the main character of which would be a CIA agent. They are seriously considering buying the TV rights to the Fawcett Publication Series which deal with CIA agents (referred to as Section "K").

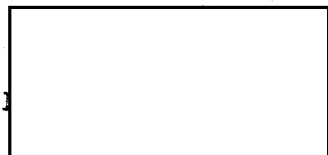
He said he had a man (Ray Bell) in Washington checking into CIA's attitude on Columbia's doing such a series, that Bell had already talked  perhaps by now with Mr. Dulles.

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The purpose of Tom Gri's call to me was to see if he could get an advance, informal reaction of CIA to their doing the series. I told him we would very much prefer that his company (nor anybody else) never did anything to publicize CIA, that even very favorable publicity is still not good for us. I explained that by studying every newspaper and magazine article which already publicizes the CIA, one could probably come up with a pretty authentic sounding serial-thriller, and perhaps not infrequently guess right, perhaps "blow" some operations and cause the Soviets to be even more alert in tracking us down and make CIA's operations more difficult and perhaps costly in lives.

I also said this is a free country and you can make movies and TV series about anything you want - we won't and can't stop you - but we'd rather you not publicize us. I offered to get in touch with my headquarters in Washington, D.C. and ask who back there Mr. Ray Bell ought to see. Mr. Gri thanked me for the offer but said Ray Bell probably has already talked to the appropriate people but he (Gri) was just looking for a little advance reaction. Mr. Gri said he appreciated what I said and his company was not bound and determined to bull it through but unless given very, very strong reasons against it, they do plan to go ahead, that they may not buy the Fawcett Series thinking perhaps they can do just as well or better by themselves. Mr. Gri volunteered to call me again and let me know how Ray Bell made out in Washington.

I told him I can't say I wish you luck but were you to go ahead we would not try to stop him but certainly would not cooperate and his company could of course not look to us here in Los Angeles for any kind of assistance. The whole conversation was most friendly and cordial.



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